Keeping Incarnate the Paschal Mystery

The Imitation of Christ

Various understanding of this

“The way of explanation”
“The way of admiration”
“The way of imitation”

-as rote-simplicity
-as “undergoing and re-enfleshing the mystery”
-as imitating Jesus’ motivation

Some distinctions

two kinds of death … “terminal” and “paschal”
two kinds of life – “resuscitated” and “resurrected”

the distinction between “life” and “spirit”

Jesus as Paradigm - The paradigm of the Paschal Mystery: 5 distinct moments

1) Passion-death ... “loss of life”
2) Resurrection ... “the reception of new life”
3) “40 days” ... “a time for grief/adjustment”
4) Ascension ... “the refusal to cling/letting the old ascend”
5) Pentecost ... “the reception of new spirit for the new life one is already living”

Some applications

1) To the death of aging
2) The death of losing health
3) The death of a honeymoon
4) The death of a dream
5) To death of an idea of God or the church

Some key quotations

There is a marvellous story told about a 4-year-old child who awoke one night frightened. In the darkness he imagined all kinds of spooks and monsters in his room. In fear he got up and ran to his parents’ bedroom. His mother calmed him and, taking him back to his own room, put on a light and reassured him with the words: “You needn’t be afraid, you are not alone, God is here in the room with you.” The child replied: “I know that God is here, but I need someone in this room who has some skin!”

“Preach the word of God unceasingly, even use words if necessary!” (Francis of Assisi)

“Christ has no body now on earth but yours; no hands but yours; no feet but yours; yours are the eyes through which is to look out Christ’s compassion to the world; yours are the feet through which he is to go about doing good; yours are the hands with which he is to bless people now.” (Theresa of Avila)

When teaching about the incarnation, do not be afraid to exaggerate ... because it is impossible to exaggerate this mystery! (Pius XII)